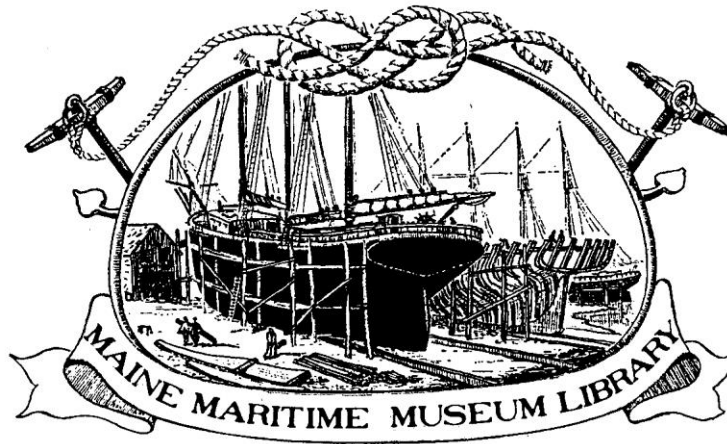


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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS - 212**

Frank S. Bowker Account Books

**1882-1952
Bulk: 1882-1922**

by
Elisabeth Meier
March, 2018

1 ½ boxes
.6 linear feet
Accession no. 69.3437, 74.94.42-45

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Abstract

Frank S. Bowker (1846-1929)

Papers, 1882-1952

Bulk: 1882-1922

1 ½ boxes

Shipbuilder in Phippsburg, Maine

This collection consists of account books kept by Frank S. Bowker in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They contain detailed records of the labor and materials he employed to build schooners at his Phippsburg shipyard, as well as complete lists of owners and of dividends paid for the vessel that he managed. An early account book documents Bowker's lumbering and varied side projects in the years just prior to starting his shipyard.

Gift of Arthur M. Bowker, Jr. and Allen E. Appleton.

MS-212. Accession # 69.3437 and #74.94.42-45

Finding aid (folder level control) in repository

Added entries—persons:

Bowker, Frank S. (1846-1929)

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Edward R. Smith (three-mast schooner)

Edwin G. Farrar (three-mast schooner)

Emma C. (sloop)

Frank B. Witherbee (three-mast schooner)

F. S. Bowker & Son (Phippsburg, Me.)

G. J. Cherry (three-mast schooner)

Henry H. Chamberlain (three-mast schooner)

Henry Weiler (three-mast schooner)

James H. Dudley (three-mast schooner)

John W. Dana (three-mast schooner)

Madeline (three-mast schooner)

Mary B. Rogers (schooner)

Mascot (sloop)

Oakes Ames (two-mast schooner)

Richard W. Clark (three-mast schooner)

Sabino (sloop)

Seguin (three-mast schooner)

Snowflake (schooner)

William E. Litchfield (three-mast schooner)

William H. Davenport (three-mast schooner)

Added entries—key terms:

Account books

Accounts, household

Labor

Lumbering

Phippsburg (Me.)

Schooners
Shipbuilders
Shipbuilding – Maine – Phippsburg
Shipbuilding – Materials
Shipbuilding – Employees
Shipowners
Shipyards – Maine – Phippsburg
Wages

Acquisition

Five of these account books were given to the museum in 1969 by Arthur M. Bowker Jr., the great-grandson of Frank S. Bowker. They were part of a larger gift that included material related to the schooner *Abbie Bowker* (now MS-13) and assorted newspaper clippings. The other four were a gift from Allen E. Appleton in 1974. These arrived with a large group of books and photographs of steamboats.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on this collection

Physical Condition

The books are in fair condition: many of the covers and spines are battered and separating, but the paper, ink, and bindings are stable and useable. A few volumes show minor water damage.

Groups of pages have been cut out of several of the books. These were missing when the volumes were processed; they were likely removed before they arrived at the museum. The missing pages are as follows:

74.94.42 (1899-1944): 25-6, 29-50, 127-136, 139-end

74.94.43 (1892-1901): 23-26

74.94.44 (1900-1908): 75-118

69.3437/A-47.3 (Earnings book): 105-6

69.3437/A-47.6 (1910-1913) (hand-numbered volume): front section (unnumbered), loose blank pages at front; 26-27 loose, 28-43, 72-121, 124-140; loose pages at end

Processing Notes

The Frank S. Bowker account books from accession #69.3437 were originally part of MS-13, the Schooner *Abbie Bowker* Papers, because the two collections were donated together. MS-212 was composed solely of Bowker material from Allen E. Appleton's gift in 1974. The two groups of account books were combined because they are so similar. They were separated from the *Abbie Bowker* papers because, while Bowker did help build that schooner and owned a large share in it, the documents in this collection do not relate to his involvement with the vessel. Instead, they were generated by the *Abbie Bowker*'s captains and creditors, and addressed to the managing owner, Charles V. Minott.

Related Materials

MS-90, the Charles V. Minott Shipyard Papers, is an extensive collection from the yard where Bowker worked early in his career, and PC-300 an equally-extensive collection of photographs from that shipyard. MS-13, the Schooner *Abbie Bowker* Papers, document a vessel that Bowker was heavily involved with just as he was starting his own shipyard. The latter were also donated to the museum by Arthur M. Bowker, Jr.

Historical Note

Frank S. Bowker (1846-1929) was the last major shipbuilder active in Phippsburg, Maine. He was the son of Joseph Bowker (1810-1882), who may have built several small schooners in Phippsburg, and the second cousin (once removed) of Timothy B. Bowker (1816-1902), who was also an active shipbuilder in town.

Frank Bowker spent much of his early career working for the Phippsburg shipbuilder Charles V. Minott, eventually serving as Minott's master builder. He also ran a timbering business on rented woodlots, worked for other Phippsburg shipbuilders, and hired himself out for various odd jobs. In between, he built several small vessels under his own name. The first of these, the twelve-ton sloop *Grey Eagle*, was launched in 1871 when Bowker was only twenty-five.

In 1891, Frank Bowker started his own shipyard on a full-time basis. He proved to be a prolific builder. Beginning with the *Henry H. Chamberlain* (three-mast schooner), Bowker went on to launch thirty-four mid-sized schooners and a handful of sloops over the next thirty years. Most of these were built on contract for independent owners, though he retained a managing interest in several. Bowker's final schooner, the 1921 *Laura Annie Barnes*, was the last major commercial sailing vessel built on the Kennebec.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains account books kept by Frank S. Bowker for shipbuilding, timbering, and vessel management. As Bowker did not rigidly separate his accounts, the same volume often covers more than one topic or vessel.

The earliest account book dates from 1882 to 1888, the years just before Bowker opened his own shipyard. It documents the timbering business that he ran on the "Whitmore Lot" and the "Drummond Lot," including wages paid to individual employees, lists of buyers, and the type and quantity of timber they purchased. Bowker also recorded shorter-term projects like loading schooners (mostly family-owned vessels), working on the Drummond ice pond, building a house for the Whitmore family, small services done for the town of Phippsburg and the school district, and the construction of the scow sloop *Sabino* in 1886.

The remaining account books cover Bowker's activities as an independent shipbuilder and manager from 1891 to 1922. For shipbuilding and repair, Bowker kept detailed accounts of labor, including the number of days worked and amount paid to each individual, in addition to separate accounts for the specialists he employed for fastening, blacksmithing, joinering, small-boat building, sparmaking, and rigging. The records of material used are less detailed but equally complete for each vessel. However, the surviving account books only document a portion of Bowker's total shipbuilding output.

For the schooners that he managed, Bowker kept lists of all shareholders and the dividends paid to each, and occasionally included itemized accounts of expenses related to the

management or operation of the schooner. The final volume in this collection records Bowker's own income from vessels he owned, some of which were built in other yards.

In the mid-twentieth century, later generations of the Bowker family used the empty pages in a few of these volumes to record household accounts and may have cut out pages that are now missing.

Box and Folder List

Box	Folder	
1	1	Account book, 1882-1888 Timbering, Drummond and Whitmore lots Scow <i>Sabino</i> (sloop), construction Labor for <i>Mary B. Rogers</i> (schooner), <i>Emma A. Cutting</i> (schooner), <i>Cambridge</i> (schooner), <i>Orizon</i> (schooner), and <i>Mary L. Varney</i> (schooner) Town of Phippsburg and School District No. 2 Drummond Ice Pond Building "Whitmore House" Personal accounts with Captain J.B. Percy, Charles V. Minott, M.R. Worry, and A. Blaisdell
	2	Account book, 1891-1899 <i>Henry H. Chamberlain</i> (three-mast schooner), construction and earnings <i>Mary B. Rogers</i> (schooner), accounts <i>William H. Davenport</i> (three-mast schooner), construction, accounts, and earnings <i>Snowflake</i> (schooner), repairs <i>Oakes Ames</i> (two-mast schooner), repairs
	3	Inclusions kept in account book, folder 2
	4	Account book, 1892-1901 <i>James H. Dudley</i> (three-mast schooner), construction and earnings <i>Seguin</i> (three-mast schooner), construction Lighter <i>Mascot</i> (sloop), construction
	5	Inclusions kept in account book, folder 4
	6	Account book, 1899-1944 <i>William H. Davenport</i> , accounts and earnings, 1899-1907 Household accounts, Walter H. Bowker, 1925-1944
	7	Inclusions kept in account book, folder 6
	8	Account book, 1900-1908 <i>Henry Weiler</i> (three-mast schooner), earnings <i>Frank B. Witherbee</i> (three-mast schooner), construction <i>John W. Dana</i> (three-mast schooner), accounts
	9	Inclusions kept in account book, folder 8
	10	Account book, 1902-1910 <i>Madeline</i> (three-mast schooner), earnings
2	1	Account book, 1908-1910 <i>Richard W. Clark</i> (three-mast schooner), construction <i>G. J. Cherry</i> (three-mast schooner), construction <i>William E. Litchfield</i> (three-mast schooner), construction <i>Emma C.</i> (sloop), construction Miscellaneous accounts
	2	Account book, 1910-1913 <i>Edward R. Smith</i> (three-mast schooner), construction

- 3 *Edwin G. Farrar* (three-mast schooner), construction
Account book, 1907-1922, 1952
Earnings, Frank S. Bowker, for his shares in the following:
 Albert H. Willis
 Alice M. Colburn
 Antoinette
 Auburn
 Carroll A. Deering
 Courtney C. Houck
 Edward R. Smith
 Edwin G. Farrar
 Frank B. Witherbee
 Frank M. Deering
 G. J. Cherry
 George S. Smith
 Georgia D. Jenkins
 Henry G. Deering
 Herbert May
 Horace M. Bickford
 James M. Hall
 Jerome Jones
 John W. Dana
 Julia P. Cole
 Madeline
 Maud H. Morey
 Seguin
 William E. Litchfield
 William H. Davenport
 William M. Critchell
Household accounts, 1952
- 4 Inclusions kept in earnings book, folder 3

Appendix A
Vessels mentioned in MS-212

Vessel Name	Type	Location (box.folder)
<i>Albert H. Willis</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Alice M. Colburn</i>	Four-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Antoinette</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Auburn</i>	Four-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Cambridge</i>	Schooner	1.1
<i>Carroll A. Deering</i>	Five-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Courtney C. Houck</i>	Five-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Edward R. Smith</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.2, 2.3
<i>Edwin G. Farrar</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.2, 2.3
<i>Emma A. Cutting</i>	Schooner	1.1
<i>Emma C.</i>	Sloop	2.1
<i>Frank B. Witherbee</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.8, 2.3
<i>Frank M. Deering (ex. Jerome Jones)</i>	Five-mast schooner	2.3
<i>G.J. Cherry</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.1, 2.3
<i>George S. Smith</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Georgia D. Jenkins</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Henry G. Deering</i>	Four-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Henry H. Chamberlain</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.2
<i>Henry Weiler</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.3, 1.5, 1.8
<i>Herbert May</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Horace M. Bickford</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>James H. Dudley</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.4
<i>James M. W. Hall</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Jerome Jones</i>	Five-mast schooner	2.3
<i>John W. Dana</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.8, 2.3
<i>Julia P. Cole</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Madeline</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.10, 2.3, 2.4
<i>Mary B. Rogers</i>	Schooner	1.1, 1.2
<i>Mary L. Varney</i>	Schooner	1.1
<i>Mascot</i>	Sloop	1.4, 1.5
<i>Maud M. Morey</i>	Four-mast schooner	2.3
<i>Oakes Ames</i>	Two-mast schooner	1.2
<i>Orizon</i>	Schooner	1.1
<i>Richard W. Clark</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.1
<i>Sabino</i>	Sloop	1.1
<i>Seguin</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.4, 2.3
<i>Snowflake</i>	Schooner	1.2
<i>William E. Litchfield</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.1, 2.3
<i>William H. Davenport</i>	Three-mast schooner	1.2, 1.6, 2.3
<i>William M. Critchett</i>	Three-mast schooner	2.3